

# The New Jersey State Broadband Initiative



How Broadband Is  
Helping Libraries  
Evolve and Transform  
into the Next Generation

CONNECTING NJ

<http://connectingnj.state.nj.us>

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## The Evolution of Libraries into the Digital Age

Libraries are now rapidly shifting to online services and are playing a significant role in providing innovative services that are changing the traditional paradigm of how libraries serviced their communities. A significant effort for libraries in the last five years has also been to provide digital literacy, job skill training, small business digital marketing workshop series and other digital training in response to the evolving digital economy, the recession and to help citizens navigate the 21st-century job market. Additionally, free digital library services and free access to e-journals, e-books, e-print archives and other free digital information resources are quickly becoming key resources available to library members.

In fact, some progressive libraries are transforming into high-tech centers beyond the “book model” with a training center offering technology classes and community social engagement center to collaborate and share on different topics. Libraries make it possible to access free online training, live webinars, live web casts, and hosting of live events via video such as Skype to bring industry experts and authors from around the world to local residents and community members.

These innovative services have developed with the evolution of the Internet and web-enabled technologies, which make having sufficient high-speed broadband access and capacity critical. Library success in the future will be vital and dependent on the digital transformation and

adoption of new innovative strategies that combine the traditional with technology enabled solutions of the next generation.

Through the [ConnectED initiative](#), libraries will be able to support connectivity for 99 percent of America's students to the digital age through next-generation broadband and high-speed wireless. ConnectED will also provide better broadband access for students in rural areas, by expanding successful efforts to connect parts of the country that typically have trouble attracting investment in broadband infrastructure.

Some examples of progressive libraries who are adopting innovative solutions include:

- Calgary Public Library (AB) [Grow a Reader Early Literacy App](#) takes the fun, interactive contents from early childhood literacy programs and delivers it to parents via mobile devices. In less than two months, the Grow a Reader app was downloaded 1,200 times.
- Chicago Public Library increases Internet access in low-income communities through its innovative "[Hotspot at Home](#)" program, which lends laptops and hotspot devices to allow residents to practice the use of digital skills and website exploration based on knowledge gained through the Library system.
- Howard County Library System (MD) HiTech implemented the [Road to a STEM Career](#), which delivers cutting-edge science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education using hands-on technology projects, experiential learning and peer-to-peer communications.

- Saint Paul Public Library (MN) [NorthStar Digital Literacy Project](#) has led to more outcome-driven digital literacy instruction by using assessments for pre- and post- tests and tailoring program content to the assessment standards. The certificate of mastery has also increased interest in computer literacy classes, particularly among non-English speakers.
- The [Los Angeles Public Library](#), in partnership with Gale/Cengage, offers adults the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma and career certificate online through Smart Horizons Career Online Education's Career Online High School (COHS). The New Jersey State Library may be offering a similar opportunity to participating libraries through a grant from the New Jersey Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development.
- The [Queens Library \(NY\)](#) recently began testing a new touch-screen job search kiosk, through Apploi, at its central branch which allows library patrons to create a profile with all of their resume information to connect them with employment throughout the State. Additionally, the kiosk can be used for real-time video interviews. Over 100 patrons used the kiosk in its first few weeks.
- [The Orlando Public Library \(FL\)](#) has initiated Camp Savvy, which are camp-style sessions for kids and teens to offer hands-on training in filming, audio production, graphic design and photography.

## Broadband-Enabled Library Services to Support Community and Economic Development

As the epicenter of many of the nation's communities, libraries can offer many benefits to its community and residents to access numerous essential resources including access to employment, healthcare, education, and self-employment resources.

- Libraries in many cases are the single source of free Internet access for people in underserved communities, urban and rural areas.
- Libraries have been critical in helping bridge the digital divide where there are significant disparities in communities where residents have broadband access and adoption issues.
- Libraries have been committed to assisting jobseekers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by providing:
  - broadband access to online employment resources
  - training on utilizing online job search capabilities
  - online workforce training opportunities to enhance their skill sets
- Broadband at libraries can help small businesses get access to online training that can help them build the skills necessary to leverage broadband to grow their small business.

- Libraries have also provided residents with access and training to healthcare services.
- Libraries with sufficient broadband provide children in their communities with online education to enrich these learning opportunities. This enables children who do not have sufficient broadband at home to get the support they need after-school and equip students with the skills to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

## Funding Libraries for Broadband

Libraries have been an important source and advocate for broadband for many years. Next generation high-speed broadband provides the capacity to support concurrent usage, volume of users and the bandwidth to make it possible to utilize the latest broadband-enabled technologies, applications, and real-time video streaming to compete and innovate in today's digital economy.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recognized this need and is revamping the E-rate program and doubling the funding for broadband capacity in libraries to procure the resources they need to build network capacity. The [FCC's E-rate program](#) is the government's largest educational technology program to provide affordable broadband access and to connect the nation's schools and libraries to the high-speed broadband capacity they need.

This is evident, most recently, in the numerous libraries across the United States that have received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus grant funds through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP).

Over \$749.7 million in grants were distributed directly or indirectly to libraries. These grant funds were used to increase broadband capacity, create and enhance public computing centers, broadband infrastructure, and broadband adoption projects.

### Recent News

- [E-Rate Program Commits Over \\$450 Million in Funding for Broadband Schools and Libraries](#)
- [Library Broadband Takes Center Stage at IMLS Hearing](#)
- [FCC: The Time is Now to Speed Library Broadband Connections](#)
- [Libraries Seek High Speed Broadband](#)
- [FCC Will Increase Investment in Broadband For Schools, Libraries by \\$2Billion Over 2 Years](#)



Some of these library broadband projects include:

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
<a href="#"><u>New Jersey libraries: Anchor Institutions as Instruments of Recovery</u></a>	Increase broadband workstations, broadband capacity, and training opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed at all libraries in the State	\$5,104,914
<a href="#"><u>Delaware Library Job/Learning Labs</u></a>	Serve Delaware residents by providing public access computers, assistive technology, videoconferencing capabilities, and wireless networking, allowing focus specifically on the needs of the unemployed, with specialized training for resume building, job search, and interview skills	\$1,899,929
<a href="#"><u>New York Computer Centers: Broadbandexpress@yourlibrary</u></a>	Increase computing capacity to address unemployment, a lack of affordable broadband services, education, training, and technical support, and to increase access to essential e-government and other online resources necessary to facilitate work, health care, education, and citizenship	\$9,521,150
<a href="#"><u>Wisconsin's Education and Library Broadband Infrastructure Buildout</u></a>	Directly connect 385 libraries, 74 school districts, and eight community colleges (including two tribal colleges) to the existing high-speed BadgerNet Converged Network by deploying 203 miles of new fiber-optic facilities to replace inadequate copper infrastructure in predominantly rural areas	\$22,978,367
<a href="#"><u>@CCESS CENTER: The Public Library of the Future</u></a>	Renovate and expand an existing library computer center and add a mobile unit to provide broadband access and training	\$2,163,655
<a href="#"><u>Fast-Forward New Mexico</u></a>	Increase statewide broadband adoption and promote computer literacy and Internet use; reach vulnerable populations, Hispanic and Native American users, small businesses, and entrepreneurs through small group trainings at public and Tribal libraries in 15 communities across the state	\$1,457,488

## Last Call for Collecting Broadband Data and the Benefit for Submitting Your Broadband Data!

In order to take full advantage of broadband funding opportunities, it is important for libraries to know their current broadband capacity and usage and what upload and download speeds is currently available from their providers.

As part of the State Broadband Initiative funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds, New Jersey has been collecting broadband data from the community anchor institutions and updating the [New Jersey Broadband Map](#) and [National Broadband Map](#) every six months.

The final data collection effort will be between June 2014 and August 2014. We are asking for your help to provide us with your broadband information on the broadband speed and the technology for the broadband speed you are receiving from your providers. This data will be included on New Jersey's broadband map and will also become the official broadband map that the FCC, policy makers, local planning officials, and other key stakeholders can use to plan and determine eligibility of broadband related funding and grants.

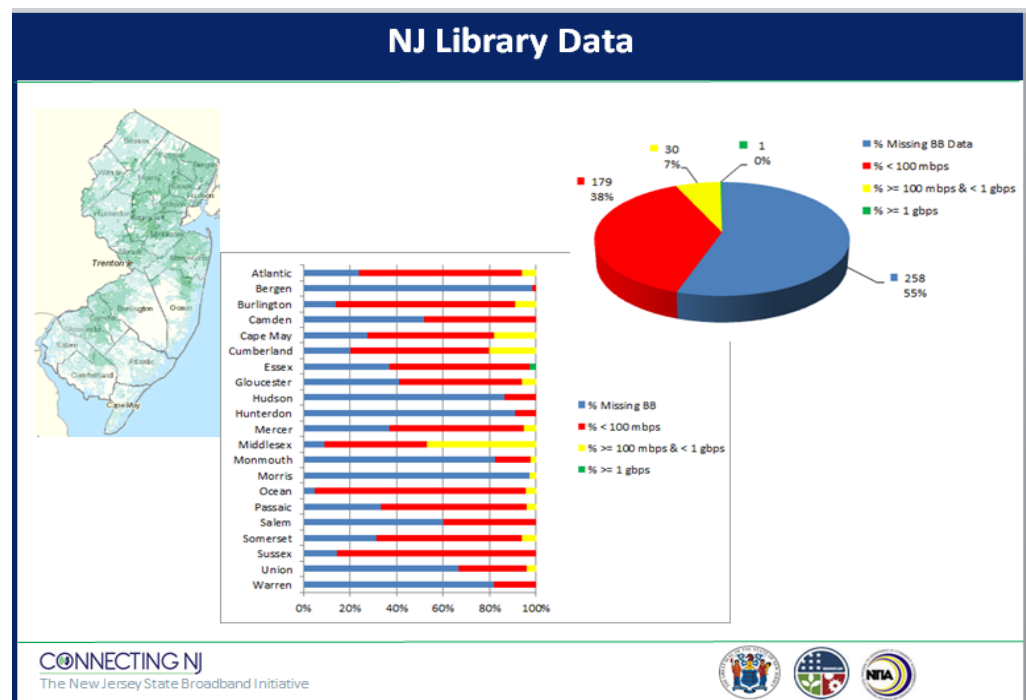
Libraries can also use the broadband map to substantiate their opportunity to apply for a grant to upgrade their broadband technology infrastructure and get the technical assistance needed to better serve their communities.

Currently, we are missing information from some New Jersey libraries. We are seeking to collect this data and urging all libraries to submit their broadband data in this final submission.

## HOW BROADBAND IS HELPING LIBRARIES EVOLVE AND TRANSFORM INTO THE NEXT GENERATION

The chart below depicts the current broadband capacity for libraries across the State. As you can see, the blue legend indicates there is still a lot of data missing to truly obtain a full picture of broadband capacity in New Jersey's libraries.

Also of importance to note, the green legend indicates that very few libraries have next generation broadband capacity, which is an opportunity to help NJ libraries to obtain the funding to gain the capacity needed.



**The map will be the official tool of the FCC for broadband funding and broadband assessment nationwide.**

This is our last chance as part of the State Broadband Initiative to provide the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) with more comprehensive data for the last submission.

We are seeking your support us in this effort and hope you see this also as a benefit to you and to the state and national broadband map overall.

- Individual libraries can submit their data by [completing this survey](#).
- Library associations and consortiums can provide the data using the [Data Collection template](#).
- To contact us, you can send an email to [connectingnj@ohsp.state.nj.us](mailto:connectingnj@ohsp.state.nj.us)